



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SENATE PASSAGE OF BUDGET A "GREAT VICTORY FOR PRESIDENT," SAYS BENNETT

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The U.S. Senate today passed by a bipartisan vote of 53-47 a budget blueprint which will pay down the national debt, provide tax relief, protect Social Security and increase the federal investment in education, health care and defense. Bennett voted for the budget and issued the following statement:

"Today's vote is a great victory for the president," said Bennett. "It shows an emerging pattern that even in a 50:50 Senate, President Bush continues to prevail without needing Vice President Cheney's vote to break a tie. It also shows a begrudging admission among Democrats that George W. Bush is on top of his job."

Following are highlights from the budget agreement:

DEBT REDUCTION

- Reduces federal debt by the maximum amount possible over the next 10 years – \$2.4 trillion.

TAX RELIEF

- Provides for \$1.35 trillion in tax relief, enough to:
 - 1) Cut tax rates across the board
 - 2) Bury the death tax
 - 3) Fix the marriage penalty, and
 - 4) Double the child credit
- Includes a \$100 billion stimulus package to help Americans with the slow economy and rising energy prices.

PROTECTS SOCIAL SECURITY AND MEDICARE

- Protects seniors by ensuring that the Social Security and Medicare Part A trust funds are not raided to fund other federal programs.

INCREASING FEDERAL INVESTMENTS

- Increases discretionary spending by \$31.3 billion, a 5% increase over last year. Overall spending increases include:
 - 1) Education: Increases spending by at least 11.5 percent.
 - 2) Medicare: Provides \$300 billion for reforms/prescription drugs.
 - 3) Defense: Includes an additional \$14.5 billion for defense.
 - 4) Health Research: Largest increase ever.
 - 5) Agriculture: Provides an additional \$66.2 billion for farmers.

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